

NIH POLICY MANUAL

26101-26-6 - CELLUAR TELEPHONE SERVICES AND EQUIPMENT

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1. **Explanation of Material Transmitted:** This chapter contains standard policy and procedures, governing the acquisition, inventory, billing and disposition of cellular telephone services and equipment.

The revised policy reflects a significant change in the role of the Center for Information Technology (CIT) / Office of Telecommunications Management (OTM), formerly the Office of Research Services (ORS) / Telecommunications Branch (TCB). The original policy required TCB to clear each acquisition and receive all bills associated with the acquisition of the equipment and the monthly services. With the passage of the Clinger-Cohen Act and the use of credit card purchases, it is appropriate to eliminate the central clearance and billing.

Institutes and Centers (ICs) now have full responsibility and authority for the management of their own cell phone programs. The IC Executive Officers, or their designees, are responsible for approving requests for equipment, review of monthly charges, inventory of property, and termination of unneeded services. The CIT/OTM will provide technical assistance to the ICs upon request.

2. **Filing Instructions:**

Remove: NIH Manual 26101-26-6 dated 12/22/93

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3. **Distribution:** NIH Manual Mailing Keys F-401, and F-404

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A. Purpose:

This chapter describes the policy and procedures for the acquisition, inventory, billing, and disposition of cellular telephone(1) services and equipment for the Institutes and Centers (ICs) of the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

B. Background:

The proliferation of cellular telephones throughout the NIH community mandates that policy and procedures be implemented to maintain internal management controls.

C. References:

1. OMB Circular A-125, Prompt Payment.
2. Property Management Information System (PMIS).
3. DHHS IRM Circular No. 14, IRM Manual, Part 2.
4. FPMR Subpart 101-35.2 - Authorized Use of Long Distance Telephone Services

D. Policy:

The purpose of this policy is to facilitate a cellular telephone services and equipment program at NIH that is effective, ensures the integrity of NIH resources, and can be implemented with minimum cost. General policies for this program are:

- Cellular telephone services will be provided to NIH personnel to conduct official Government business if their request is approved by the IC Cell Phone Manager(s) (an individual(s) designated by the IC Executive Officer).
- Cellular telephone services are to be used only for Government business when regular telephone service is not available.
- The Government will be reimbursed by authorized users by check or money order, payable to the U.S. Treasury, for the cost of calls that IC Cell Phone Managers determine are not official business calls. Personal calls that are frequent, long, or made when off duty would require reimbursement. The IC Cell Phone Managers will determine which calls require reimbursement.
- The purchase, repair, maintenance, and justification for the use of cellular telephones will be the responsibility of the requesting IC.
- The monthly access feature and usage charges for cellular services will be billed to the requesting IC.

- Government-purchased cellular telephones may be installed in government vehicles, (2) but must not be installed in privately owned vehicles.
- Long distance calls made from cellular telephones should be made through the FTS2000 system (using a federal calling card authorization number), whenever possible.

E. Definitions:

1. Cellular Telephone Service - Technology employing low power radio transmission to access the public switched telephone network; users may be stationary or mobile.
2. Employee Certification for Use of Cellular Telephones - Mandatory form that must be filled out by the Employee who wishes to utilize cellular technology. It gives a brief statement of NIH Policy with regard to cellular telephone equipment and services (refer to [Appendix 1](#)).
3. FTS2000 - The General Services Administration (GSA) procured a private telephone network that provides long distance services to Government agencies. The FTS2000 also provides switched and dedicated lines, audio and video conferencing, and other services.
4. Mobile Telephone - A telephone used with cellular telephone service that includes a stationary radio transmission transmitter/receiver, generally in an automobile or other vehicle.
5. Official Business - Activities related to job duties, program requirements, mission attainment, or other duties as assigned by NIH management.
6. Portable Telephone - A telephone used with cellular telephone services that includes movable radio transmission capability, i.e., hand-held.
7. Public Switched Network - Network established and operated by common carriers (such as Bell Atlantic for local service, and AT&T for long distance service) for the provision of switched services and dedicated private lines for public use.

F. Responsibilities:

1. Institutes and Centers (Cell Phone Managers)
 - The IC Cell Phone Manager(s) will review and approve/deny all justifications for the use of cellular telephones, and all documents relating to the purchase, repair, maintenance, and payment of the monthly access features and usage charges for cellular services.
 - The IC Cell Phone Manager(s) will review the monthly billings for cellular telephone services, determine which calls are official business,

and request, in writing, reimbursement from the authorized user, when necessary.

- The IC Cell Phone Manager(s) will be responsible for the cellular telephones and all related equipment when they are returned by the authorized user. Reassignments will require the same justification and certification as a new request.
- The authorized user's Property Custodial Officer is responsible for entering new equipment into the NIH Property Management Information System (PMIS) and updating the information whenever there is a change of authorized users.

2. Authorized Users

- Authorized users are responsible for reimbursing their IC for the repair or replacement cost of a damaged, lost or stolen cellular telephone, if its damage, loss or theft was due to their negligence.
- Authorized users are responsible for reimbursing the government for unauthorized use (by other individuals) or unauthorized charges. They must also review the monthly billings, verify the accuracy of the billing, and identify any calls that were not official business.
- Authorized users are responsible for returning the telephone to their IC when it is no longer required to carry out their IC work assignments. They must reimburse their IC for the purchase price if they do not return the telephone.

3. Center for Information Technology (CIT)

The CIT Office of Telecommunications Management will provide, upon request (call 301-435-HELP), assistance in selecting a vendor, equipment and services, or placement of an order.

G. Procedures:

The procedures described below must be followed by the ICs when requesting or reassigning cellular telephone services and equipment.

1. Justification

All requests for cellular telephone services and equipment must be approved by the requesting IC's Cell Phone Manager prior to placing an order. The request must include:

- a. Justification explaining the intended use of the cellular telephone
- b. The name, organization, office telephone number, building, and room

number of the user

- c. Type of telephone(s) (hand-held, transportable, etc.) and wattage (when known).
- d. Vendor (3) that is planned to be used to obtain service
- e. Cost of the equipment and services
- f. Employee Certification for Use of Cellular Telephones (See Appendix 1)
- g. Time frame for use

2. Acquisition

After the justification has been approved, an order should be placed with the chosen vendor, unless a cellular telephone is available from an IC inventory of cellular telephones available for reassignment. The acquisition can be made using a purchase order or a government purchase credit card.

3. Inventory

Upon delivery and receipt of the cellular telephone equipment, the Property Custodial Officer (PCO) in the Authorized User's organization will enter the serial number and other property information into the Property Management Information System (PMIS). The authorized user will be required to sign the employee certification prior to taking possession of the equipment. The PMIS should be updated to reflect any changes in equipment or user within five (5) working days.

4. Billing

It is the responsibility of the IC to enter receiving information into the Administrative Data Base (ADB) for receipt of the equipment. Monthly cellular service charges will be billed directly to the IC. The authorized user must review the monthly billings, verify the accuracy of the billing, and identify any calls that were not official business. The IC Cell Phone Manager must also review the billing to ensure that the government pays only for authorized business calls, and obtain reimbursement from the authorized user for unauthorized usage. Bills for cellular telephone services must not be filed in a manner that allows them to be retrieved by user name or telephone number.

5. Disposition

When authorized users no longer have a need for a cellular telephone, they must return the equipment to their supervisor, their Property Custodial Officer (PCO), or their IC Cell Phone Manager. The IC Cell Phone Manager and the PCO must be notified, in writing, of any change in status or responsibility for

the equipment. If the telephone is not immediately reassigned, it should be placed in an IC inventory of cellular telephones available for reassignment, and the cellular services should be terminated. A copy of the Employee Certification, signed by the IC recipient, will serve as a receipt for the employee.

H. Records Retention and Disposal:

Records for cellular telephone services will be retained by the ICs in accordance with NIH Manual [1743](#), Keeping and Destroying Records, item 1700-D, Communications Services.

NIH e-mail messages. NIH e-mail messages (messages, including attachments, that are created on NIH computer systems or transmitted over NIH networks) that are evidence of the activities of the agency or have informational value are considered Federal records. These records must be maintained in accordance with current NIH Records Management guidelines. Contact your IC Records Officer for additional information.

All e-mail messages are considered Government property, and, if requested for a legitimate Government purpose, must be provided to the requester. Employees' supervisors, NIH staff conducting official reviews or investigations, and the Office of Inspector General may request access to or copies of the e-mail messages. E-mail messages must also be provided to Congressional oversight committees if requested and are subject to Freedom of Information Act requests. Since most e-mail systems have back-up files that are retained for significant periods of time, e-mail messages and attachments are likely to be retrievable from a back-up file after they have been deleted from an individual's computer. The back-up files are subject to the same requests as the original messages.

I. Management Controls:

The purpose of this manual issuance is to define policies and procedures for acquiring and managing cellular telephone resources and services.

1. Office Responsible for Reviewing Management Controls Relative to this Chapter

Office of Information Resources Management, Center for Information Technology (CIT)

2. Frequency of Review

The ICs will be reviewed every third year, on a rotating basis.

3. Method of Review

This review will be part of the periodic review of the IT Management Process of the ICs conducted by the CIT. Through the cell phone management process, a manager should be able to provide the reviewers, within a few hours, the

number of phones available, the number in use, the names of the vendors providing cellular telephone services, the monthly cost for phones and services, names of authorized users, files to confirm that Employee Certifications are kept, and access to all pertinent records.

4. Management Control Reports

Management Control Reports are sent to the Deputy Director for Management (DDM), NIH.

Footnotes:

1. The informal term, cell phone, will be used in place of the formal term, cellular telephone, in some places in this document.
2. Call the Motor Pool, 301-496-3426, for installation in a government vehicle.
3. The Office of Telecommunications Management (310-435-HELP) can provide a list of vendors.

Appendix 1. Employee Certification for Use of Cellular Telephones Policies/Responsibilities:

Cellular telephones are assigned to employees whose need for telephone service is of an essential nature in the conduct of Government business.

Cellular telephone services are to be used only for Government business when regular telephone service is not available.

Authorized users are responsible for reimbursing their IC for the repair or replacement cost of a damaged, lost or stolen cellular telephone, if its damage, loss or theft was due to their negligence.

Authorized users are responsible for reimbursing the government for unauthorized use (by other individuals) or unauthorized charges. They must also review the monthly billings, verify the accuracy of the billing, and identify any calls that were not official business.

Authorized users are responsible for returning the telephone to their IC when it is no longer required to carry out their IC work assignments. They must reimburse their IC for the purchase price if they do not return the telephone.

Employees violating these procedures are subject to disciplinary action, including loss of cellular telephone privileges.

EMPLOYEE CERTIFICATION

I have read and understand the requirements stated above and agree to adhere to them.

Name of Authorized User: _____

Signature of Authorized User

Date

Cell Phone: Mfr _____ Model _____ Serial

Phone # _____

Return: Name of Recipient _____

Signature of Recipient

Date Received

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